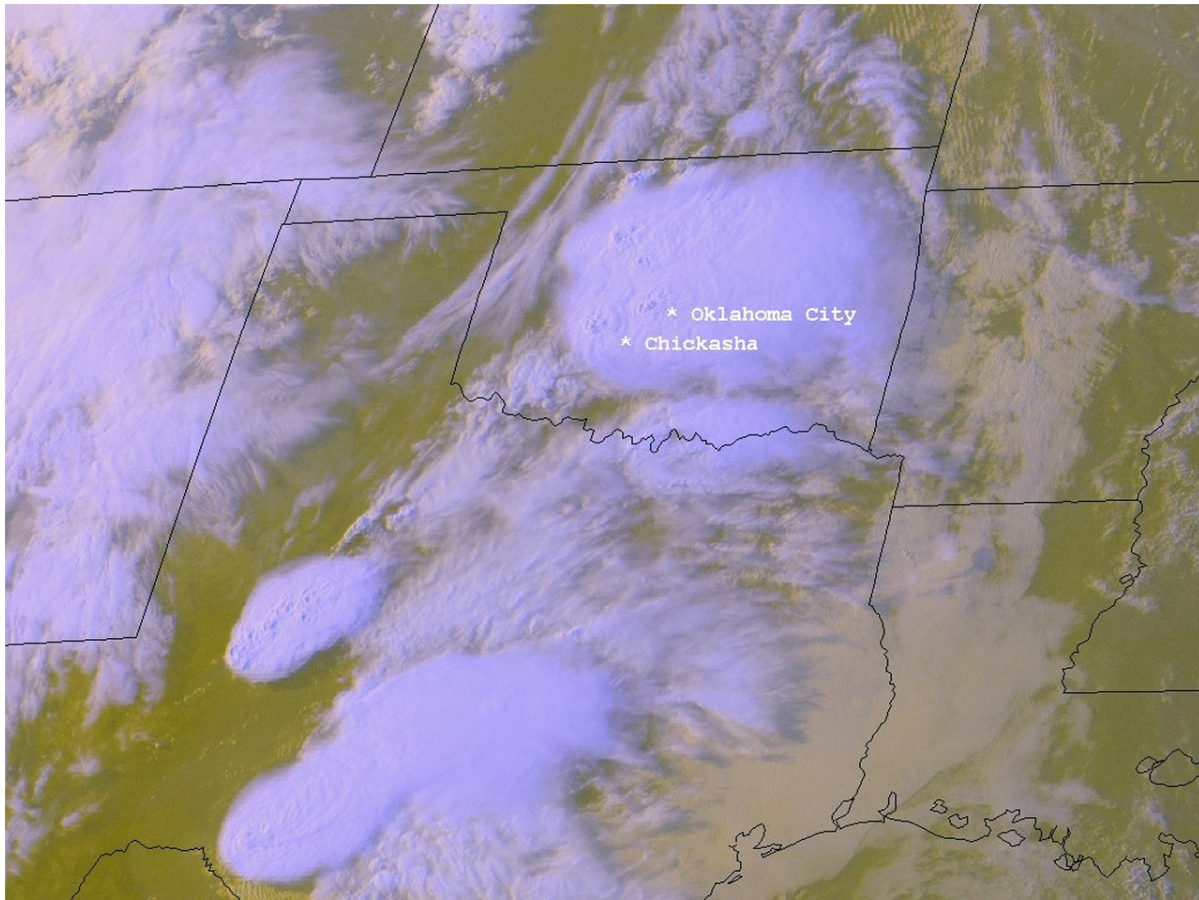




Service Assessment

Oklahoma/Southern Kansas Tornado Outbreak of May 3, 1999



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service
Silver Spring, Maryland**

Cover: Supercell thunderstorms generated killer tornadoes in a swath from west-central Oklahoma through southern Kansas. Visible satellite imagery from Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite-8, 6:45 p.m. Central Daylight Time (CDT), May 3, 1999. (Courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service)



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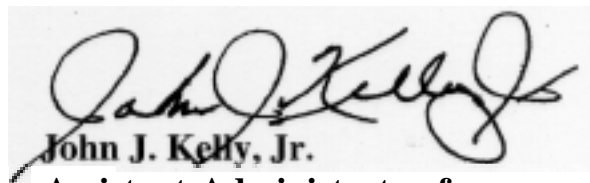
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
William M. Daley, Secretary

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
D. James Baker, Administrator
National Weather Service
John J. Kelly, Jr., Assistant Administrator

Preface

On May 3, 1999, one of the largest tornado outbreaks in history struck west-central Oklahoma and southern Kansas, killing 48 people, leaving thousands homeless and resulting in over \$1 billion in property damage. Due to the magnitude of this event, the National Weather Service (NWS) conducted a Service Assessment to examine the effectiveness of NWS warnings and other services in minimizing loss of life and injuries.

Service Assessments are critical to the ongoing efforts of the NWS to improve the quality and timeliness of our warning services. Successful procedures are highlighted and shared with other offices; shortcomings are identified and resolved. This review process ensures that NWS forecast techniques, products and services will continue to evolve and improve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John J. Kelly, Jr.", is positioned above the printed name. The signature is fluid and cursive.

John J. Kelly, Jr.
Assistant Administrator for
Weather Services

August 1999